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ABSTRACT

The University of Nevada at Las Vegas College of Education has responded to numerous calls for educational reform with the establishment of the Committee to Review Teacher Education (CRTE). CRTE is composed of school district administrators, elementary and secondary school principals and master teachers, a State Department of Education representative, a local teachers' union president, and representatives from the university's various departments. The committee reviewed recommendations regarding the strengths and weaknesses of four- and five-year teacher preparation programs, reviewed recommendations regarding the role of liberal arts versus methods courses in teacher training, and recommended the implementation of an induction year model. Seven recommendations were made by CRTE regarding: (1) retention of the four-year program; (2) reduction and consolidation in the foundations of education sequence; (3) structural changes in the elementary education program; (4) structural changes in the secondary education program; (5) a more competitive elementary education program; (6) exploration of graduate degrees combining pedagogy and content; and (7) combining certification and graduate degrees for those with baccalaureate degrees seeking initial certification. (CB)

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One College of Education's Response to the Call for Reform in Teacher Education

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Running Head: ONE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION'S RESPONSE

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Abstract

Over the recent months, a number of reports calling for reform of the American educational process has received national attention. This paper details how the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, is attempting to respond to the various recommendations contained in those reports. Specific attention is given to proposed modification of existing program content and to the implementation of an induction year model.

ONE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION'S RESPONSE

TO

THE CALL FOR REFORM IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Over the recent months, a number of reports calling for reform in the American educational process has received national attention. Within the college of Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), these reports have not gone unnoticed; indeed they have been studied carefully, discussed in detail, then re-studied and re-discussed.

After thoughtful deliberation, in April, 1986, Dr. Dale Andersen, Dean of the College of Education at UNLV presented his Assistant Dean with the charge to establish a select committee, review teacher education programs existant within the College and, where perceived to be necessary, to formulate and present to him recommendations for change.

Over that summer, composition of the proposed Committee to Review Teacher Education (CRTE) slowly developed. Members were not chosen for their agreement on education issues; rather, at the risk of making consensus difficult, selection represented a number of interests. There were members from Clark County School District's administration*, Principals and Master Teachers from elementary and secondary public schools, a representative of the State Department of Education, President of the local teachers' union,

representatives from the Colleges of Arts and Letters, and Science, Mathematics, and Engineering at The University, as well as four unit administrators and one Area Coordinator from the College of Education.

Exercising a philosophy similar to that predominate during selection of members for the Carnegie Task Force (1986), it was believed that, if this group of individuals could agree on changes necessary for providing a higher quality education for all children, then the very reality of this consensus would contribute greatly to the probability that major changes required for enduring improvement of teacher education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, actually would come about.

With its composition finalized in September, 1986, the Committee's initial meeting took place the following month. Over the next seven months, its deliberations, and those of its two sub-committees, focused on three charges:

*Author's note: In Nevada, each of its seventeen counties is an autonomous school district. Clark County includes the highly urbanized communities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, and Boulder City. With its more than 96,000 students, it also is the major contracting unit for graduates from UNLV's College of Education.

1. Relative to the teacher training program at UNLV, review and make recommendations specific to the strengths and shortcomings of a four- and a five-year preparation time;
2. Review and make recommendations specific to the role of Liberal Arts versus methods courses in the teacher training program at UNLV; and
3. Recommend a model (or models) for providing support services to the College of Education's graduates during their initial teaching year.

Guiding the Committee's deliberations at all times were the characteristics of good teachers which appeared in Marie Hughes' well-received report to the U.S. Office of Education, "The Model of Good Teaching" (1959).

"The measure...of good teaching is the quality of the response the teacher makes to the child or group with whom he is interacting. It is the child who is reaching out, seeking, raising the questions, trying out his ideas.

How does the teacher respond so that he can be used as a resource by the child?

If the child is to become a man who is "open to his experience," a man who can encompass much of reality, then as a child he must relate positively to more people, things, and situations.

If the child is to become a man who has positive feelings toward himself and cherishes uniqueness in others, then the teacher's response to him must respect his own individuality.

If the child is to grow into a man who possesses highly developed communicative skills, he must have opportunity to talk and to listen to others.

If the child is to grow into a man who acts with an attitude of social responsibility, the teacher's responses must include setting limits with and for him, clarifying standards with public criteria, structuring the situation with clarity, reprimanding with public criteria, giving the child responsibility for others, and evaluating with discrimination.

Good teaching, then, requires appropriate responsiveness to the data the child and group are placing in the situation.

Good teaching requires a reduction in the controlling functions exercised continuously by the teacher.

Good teaching requires that the classroom be well managed so that the business of learning may receive full attention.

Good teaching requires that the human environment be accepting of each individual, that in some way it tell him that he is important.

Good teaching keeps the interpersonal relationships supportive within the classroom.

Good teaching requires that the teacher be a well-educated, mature person who has the insight and energy for this demanding job ...The specifics for a growing child are not entirely predictable. To provide for the differences that are the hopes of each generation requires more than a textbook and a dictionary. It requires the responsive human environment that fosters exploration and initiative."

Most certainly there was one rubric that stood out above all others: "What teachers do in the classroom makes a difference!"

Following six weeks of intensive dialog, the Committee of the Whole divided into two subcommittees, both focusing upon "Professional Teacher Development" but with one emphasizing "Program Content" and the other studying "The Induction Year." Representation from the public schools, the teachers' union, State Department of Education, and higher education was reflected in the structure of both subcommittees.

Program Content

The Subcommittee to Study Program Content met for some six months, seeking possible solutions and/or recommendations specific to the following questions:

1. Should the present four-year initial certification programs within the College of Education at UNLV be

maintained or abolished in favor of a five-year initial certification program?

2. In the event four-year programs are preserved, are there modifications that could, or should, be made in the curricula of the various certification programs to make them stronger?
3. Should admission- and exit-level requirements be increased in initital certification programs? and
4. In the event four-year initial certification programs are preserved, should those with baccalaureate degrees in fields other than Education who seek initial certification: A) Be required to complete certification at the baccalaureate level? or B) be permitted to apply for graduate programs, work towards a graduate degree and, where appropriate, take graduate level courses to meet initial certification requirements?

As an outgrowth of the Subcommittee's deliberations, some six recommendations were forwarded to the Dean. Each of these will be reviewed; because of their potential impact, some will be more detailed than others.

RECOMMENDATION ONE: THE PRESENT FOUR-YEAR INITIAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION SHOULD BE RETAINED.

Rationale

Presently, the University of Nevada System requires a minimum of 19 semester hours in the General Education, or Liberal Arts, Core; the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, requires a minimum of 46 semester hours. A review of the UNLV Undergraduate Catalog notes that most majors at this University take only the minimum of 46 to 54 hours in Liberal Arts. For majors in the College of Education, however, exposure to the Liberal Arts is far greater. For example, Elementary Education majors are required to take a minimum of 58 hours in the Core plus an additional 15 to 26 hours in a specific field of study -- or cognate area. In all, Elementary Education majors take from 73 to 84 semester hours in the Liberal Arts. Secondary Education majors must complete from 46 to 50 hours in the Core, a minimum of 33 hours in a first teaching field and 24 hours in a second teaching field, all of which is taken outside the College of Education.

The criticism that teachers do not have sufficient preparation in Liberal Arts training must be evaluated in light of the amount of such exposure the pre-service teacher has when compared with other majors. It is apparent that both Elementary and Secondary

Education majors at UNLV have significantly more Liberal Arts content than do most other majors.

There also is little justification for applying the Liberal Arts formula across all majors. Because the Elementary teacher typically is responsible for both the pedagogy and content of all subjects taught in the Elementary curriculum, requiring the prospective Elementary teacher to stay in the Liberal Arts for four years while majoring in one content area is no more logical than to require a Secondary Education major to study the pedagogy and content of all subjects taught in the secondary school, even though (s)he would be responsible for teaching only one of them.

It was the Subcommittee's position that four-year initial certification programs should remain and should form the nucleus for preparing those who, upon entering college, select the teaching profession. This is not to preclude the development of five-year programs which include both the certificate and a Master's degree, or other programs at the graduate level which provide initial certification for those with baccalaureate degrees in the Liberal Arts. While such programs should be developed and made available, they should not replace existing four-year certification programs.

RECOMMENDATION TWO: REDUCTION AND CONSOLIDATION SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN THE FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION SEQUENCE.

Rationale

The present Foundations of Education sequence requires some 20 semester hours of study and includes

Nevada School Law,

Human Growth & Development,

Psychology in Education,

Tests and Measurements,

Multicultural Foundations,

Consultative Techniques for the Classroom Teacher, and

The Exceptional Child.

It was the Subcommittee's recommendation that this sequence be reduced to no more than six hours and, to the extent possible, that the Multicultural and Exceptional Child components be delivered through an infusion plan, rather than as organized courses.

RECOMMENDATION THREE: MAKE STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Rationale

The Subcommittee detailed some eight objectives specific to this particular goal.

1. Provide alternatives for meeting certification requirements in Computer Education.
2. Replace the course, "Human Relations for Prospective Teachers," an elective, with the required course, "Introduction to the Teaching Profession."
3. Replace "Elementary School Curriculum" with "Models of Teaching."
4. Require both developmental and remedial reading instruction in the Elementary Methods sequence.
5. Move the pre-student teaching experience back to accompany, rather than follow, the methods courses.
6. Evaluate the 11 approved Areas of Concentration (Minors) for Elementary Education majors and, where advisable, delete and/or add content.
7. Require candidates in all certification programs to complete all required coursework in the Program of Studies — including student teaching — as a prerequisite for granting of their degree.
8. Increase the minimum semester hours in Elementary Science content from nine to twelve.
9. Implement a three-phase introductory program to increase field-based experiences in the Elementary Education program.

Remarks attending Objective 7 noted the Subcommittee's support for this requirement as a means of preventing students enrolled in certification programs from graduating without student teaching. "Accumulating sufficient hours and having a minimum GPA should notbe the criteria which qualify a student in the College of Education for graduation."

RECOMMENDATION FOUR: MAKE STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Here, the Subcommittee offered four objectives for attainment of the stated goal.

1. Implementation of a field-based program for Secondary Education in which practica experiences occur in three-phase sequences modeled somewhat after the Elementary field-based program;
2. Increasing the coursework in Secondary major and minor methods;
3. Adding coursework that relates to management of the Secondary classroom; and
4. Reducing from 42 hours to 30 hours the Professional Education requirements for Secondary Education.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE: MAKE THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM MORE COMPETITIVE.

Rationale

Intrinsic in this goal was the Subcommittee's intent to improve the image of the Elementary Education program and to attract more highly qualified undergraduate students to that field. Some five objectives were noted.

1. Require students to pass all three portions of the Preprofessional Skills Test prior to being eligible for admission to the Program and to raise the present minimally acceptable scores significantly.
2. Consider raising the minimal GPA for admission to the Program;
3. Require students to have completed no less than 30 semester hours of the University Core, with a minimal GPA as reflected in (2) above, prior to applying for admission to Elementary Education.
4. Consider increasing the minimal GPA for enrollment in Student Teaching. A study should be conducted to determine the impact upon admission if the GPA were raised from the current 2.50 in all Professional Education courses to 2.65 beginning with the 1988-90 Catalog and to 2.75 beginning with the 1990-92 Catalog.

5. Consider changing the grading system for Student Teaching from the curent Pass/Fail to letter grades and changing the characteristics evaluated to ensure they reflect those elements of research-supported effective teaching.

RECOMMENDATION SIX: PROGRAMS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL TO COMBINE CERTIFICATION AND GRADUATE DEGREES FOR THOSE WITH BACCALAUREATE DEGREES WHO SEEK INITIAL CERTIFICATION.

Rationale

It was the Subcommittee's position that those individuals already holding baccalaureate degrees in non-certification areas, but seeking to be credentialed to teach, should be able to obtain both the certificate and a graduate degree in considerably less time than that presently required for them to complete the 57-60 semester hours needed to earn just the certificate.

It also was noted that the Department of Secondary Education already has in place a 36 semester-hour Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree which includes all initial certification requirements.

RECOMMENDATION SEVEN: GRADUATE DEGREES WHICH COMBINE PEDAGOGY AND CONTENT SHOULD BE EXPLORED.

Rationale

The College of Education was encouraged to explore ways of

developing graduate degree programs for teachers interested in combining teaching with content. This was viewed as being especially advantageous for those teaching math, science, social studies, and language arts at the Secondary or Elementary levels.

The Subcommittee again referred to the MAT now in place in Secondary Education and noted no parallel in Elementary. A model was offered suggesting a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, with an emphasis in Math Education. Here the Program of Studies might include nine units in content Math, nine units in Math Education, 12 units of Master's Core requirements, and six units of electives in, or outside of, the College of Education.

The Induction Year

Since the 1983 publication of A Nation at Risk (1986), a hue and cry of remarkable dimensions has shaken teacher education in America. NCATE's Redesign (1986), the Holmes Group (1986), and the Carnegie Forum (1986) proposals suggest important and sometimes seductive changes needed to improve education. In many cases, these recommendations for reform cross all three proposals, for example, "Provide additional resources for teacher preparation" and "Support teacher induction." In other cases, the groups are remarkably singular in their suggestions for reform: "Encourage experimentation and innovation" (NCATE only), or "Create a national

certification board" (Carnegie Report only).

Whether one agrees with all or none of these reports, the fact that the profession of teaching is in critical condition can be seen in statements contained in a number of recent studies. The first, conducted by the Rand Corporation (Review-Journal, 1987), suggests that 40 to 50 percent of those who enter the teaching profession in 1987 will leave it within three years. Estimates from a second study (Plisko & Stern, 1985) are that, by 1995, local demand for teachers will exceed the supply by 30 percent. In other words, for every 100 teaching positions that need to be filled, the school district will be able to hire only sixty. A third study (Figge, 1985) notes that a disturbing number of newly trained and certified teachers, in spite of their education, choose not to enter the profession at all, opting, instead, to seek a career completely removed from the field of education. Unfortunately, those graduates who forego teaching are among the most academically talented.

While others could be cited, these particular studies suggest that something must be done to attract good people to the profession and to keep them, once there.

In its proposing this particular model, the Subcommittee studing the Induction Year Concept attempted to address not only

the issue of teacher quantity, but also that of teacher quality. It viewed the Induction Year Program (IYP) as not unlike an internship in the medical profession, with its primary purpose that of introducing new colleagues to their careers. Its intent would not be that of creating a trial by fire wherein only the fittest would survive; it would not be designed to take the measure of first-year teachers; rather, it would be intended to provide them with support, to get them accustomed "to the water" before expecting them to sink or swim. Knowing that such assistance was available their first year, reasoned the Subcommittee, would encourage the eager but fearful undergraduate to pursue a career in education and would reduce the apprehension felt by the new graduate.

Too, the Subcommittee envisioned that those veteran teachers selected as mentors would find in the proposed program not only a break from teaching but also a significant acknowledgement of their worth and an opportunity to both increase and disseminate their expertise. To be selected as mentors would become an important rung on their personal career ladders, as well as a refreshing opportunity to recommit themselves to their disciplines. Upon return to the classroom, they would take with them renewed enthusiasm, additional knowledge of their content discipline, and a more broadly-based understanding of the profession of teaching.

In addition to undergraduates considering teaching as a career, first-year teachers just entering the profession, and the veteran teacher ready for a rejuvenating experience as a mentor, the Subcommittee believed there were others who would benefit from the proposed Induction Year Program. Professors and students at UNLV would profit from having the mentor teachers on campus. Their real-world experiences would act as "a kind of mooring line for a pedagogy that occasionally appears to drift aimlessly throughout theoretical seas." The University and the School District would continue to collaborate to meet their mutual responsibility to provide Nevada with excellent teachers; and the School District would have more and better teachers to put in their classrooms.

General Goals

As presented by the Subcommittee, realistic goals for the Induction Year Program would include the following:

1. Enhancement of professional performance by the beginning teacher

   Left on their own to develop expertise as a teacher, initiates frequently acquire such insight by trial and error. When left to "survive," these neophytes may acquire techniques that crystallize and harden into a poor teaching style.

2. Increasing the retention rate of promising beginning teachers

Nationally, an estimated 15 percent of all new teachers leave the profession after their first year of teaching, compared to the overall teacher turnover rate of six percent. Of all who enter the profession, 40-50 percent will leave during the first seven years of their career; two-thirds to three-fourths of those will do so in the first four years of teaching.

It was suggested that induction programs should include evaluation provisions to "weed out" those teachers who are the least promising. It further was suggested that the District have policies and procedues in place which would make this goal possible in ways that conformed with due process requirements. Without such policies and procedures clearly articulated, it would be unrealistic to expect the beginning teacher program to assume responsibility for screening out the less-than-effective teachers.

3. Promoting the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers

   The Induction Year Program being proposed would assist beginning teachers to confront the initial shock of classroom reality partly by de-isolating them from their colleagues. In a cautionary vein, however, support for the weak teacher would have to result in demonstrably improved performance; anything less could result in positively reinforcing that teacher for doing a poor job.

4. Providing important input to the teacher training institution

   The system which "produces" teachers in this country is organizationally separate from the system which "consumes" teachers. New teachers are expected to transfer the generalized information and training received in teacher education to a specific school site where, in all probability, expectancies for both learning and teaching already are well-established. The professor of education who sees graduates of his course actually teaching children is a rare speciman. There is little

feedback to the training institution relative to whether or not skills being taught by its faculty are meaningful. Because of institutional separation, content presented by professors of education may not be compatible with current school practice.

The Subcommittee felt obligated to offer a note of caution when it observed that, while the Induction Year Program would offer support to first-year teachers, unless that support was coupled with a determined and systematic effort to improve working conditions for all teachers, the benefits of the IYP would not be realized.

Benefits of the Proposed Induction Year Program to the Clark County School District (CCSD)

Unlike many teacher training programs, at UNLV the College of Educaiton conducts its field experience components within a single school district. Benefits of the proposed IYP to the District were viewed as including, but not being limited to, the following:

1. Increased opportunity for professional development and career incentives for identified Master Teachers;
2. Increased opportunity for CCSD influence upon, understanding of, and direct involvement with, undergraduate and graduate teacher training within the

College of Education at UNLV:

3. Increased numbers of school personnel trained to work with the Induction Year intern;
4. A renewed interest by teachers in formal pedagogy through on-going interaction with UNLV faculty and staff; and
5. More professional, confident, and productive teachers.

The Subcommittee noted that all of the preceding benefits would accrue with no additional cost to the District.

Benefits of the Proposed Induction Year Program to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas

It was the Subcommittee's position that benefits from the proposed IYP to the College of Education and other units at UNLV would include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. More individualization of programs for preservice and graduate students in teacher training at UNLV;
2. Involvement of exemplary public school teachers in teacher training programs;
3. The direct translation of theoretical pedagogy into classroom practice;
4. Enhanced credibility of teacher training programs though direct involvement of CCSD classroom practitioners;
5. An excellent opportunity to conduct much needed research on effective teacher training and classroom teaching; and

6. Improved professional growth planning and career enhancement for all teachers.

The Model

Patterned after a program implemented by the College of Education at the University of New Mexico and directed by Dr. Sandra Odell, the model proposed by the Subcommitee would be based upon an exchange of first-year graduate interns with CCSD Master Teachers. Master Teachers were defined as those who: 1) Have taught for three years; 2) hold the Master's degree; 3) received positive recommendations from their Principal and two others; and 4) perferably, have worked directly with student teachers in the recent past. First-year graduate interns would be those who have completed certification requirements but have not yet had experience as full-time teachers. These interns would teach within CCSD classrooms and would receive on-going support from the Clinical Supervision Staff (CSS) consisting, in part, of the CCSD Master Teachers working within the UNLV teacher training programs.

A ratio of one CCSD Master Teacher to 1.5 graduate interns would permit maintenance of a "no cost" program. This concept is based upon the reality that monies necessary to staff "X" number of classrooms with full-salaried teachers (plus fringe) could be reallocated vis-a-vis staffing CCSD classrooms with graduate

interns who would be on fellowships from The University and who would earn half of a contracted teacher's salary (without fringe).

Stated somewhat differently,

1. Thirty fully certified, but not yet contracted, first-year teachers enrolled in the Graduate Intern Program at UNLV would be selected and placed as Teaching Interns in CCSD classrooms.
2. Twenty Master Teachers from CCSD would be selected and released to work directly with the UNLV professional staff in preservice and graduate teacher training programs, supervising and interacting with student teachers, graduate interns, and all first-year teachers in the District.

The ratio of 1.5 Graduate Interns per Master Teacher would allow for the program to pay for itself since Interns would be paid half of a first-year teacher's salary (without fringe). This "no additional cost" feature of the program would be based upon the cost for staffing thirty classrooms at an average figure of $31,850 per classroom (full salary plus fringe), or $955,500. Using this figure as base, the following "breakout" would be possible:

Cost for staffing 30 classrooms with Graduate Interns at half of a first-year teacher's salary (no fringe)	$258,750
Cost for 20 Master Teachers at full salary (plus fringe)	637,000
Expenses for administrative costs, office support, direct and indirect charges	49,750
Total Expenses	$955,500

The Subcommittee further proposed that The University would provide professional staff, offices, support services, and expenses accrued by various Departments for maintenance of the program.

For its initial year, the Subcommittee recommended that personnel should include:

1. Twenty Master Teachers as clinical supervisors and support teachers;

From Elementary	7
From Secondary	8
From Special Education	3
From Health, Physical Education & Recreation	2

and

2. Thirty Graduate Interns as full-time CCSD classroom teachers;

From Elementary	11
From Secondary	12
From Special Education	4
From Health, Physical Education & Recreation	3

It was the Subcommittee's recommendation that Interns not automatically be placed in those classrooms vacated by Master Teachers. Normally Master Teacher positions within CCSD are staffed by administrative transfers and from within the District's existing pool of teachers. Interns, however, would be placed before new teachers and would be considered first-year teachers.

Research

As a pilot program, the proposed Induction Year would encourage research focusing primarily upon issues surrounding retention. The resulting information on preservice, first-year, and Master Teachers is critical to a better understanding of such problems. The Research and Development Office of CCSD and the facilities of the Far West Labs would be used to supplement the College of Education's research development, implementation, and analyses.

Program reports would be made quarterly and would be available to CCSD-UNLV personnel and the education community as a whole via

publications in scholarly journals.

Governance

Final design of the proposed Induction Year Program would be determined by a committee whose members would represent the Colleges of Education, Arts and Letters, Science, Mathematics and Engineering at UNLV; the CCSD elementary and secondary schools; CCSD's Administration Center; the Clark County Classroom Teachers' Association; and the Nevada Department of Education (southern division). This committee would be co-chaired by one representative each from UNLV and the School District. This same committee also should be charged with implementing the program, meeting at regularly scheduled times to review successes and problems, and submitting written reports to appropriate administrators at The University and the School District.

Current Status

Carrying the title, "A Quest for Quality," a single report reflecting considerations and recommendations of the two subcommittees was prepared and submitted to the College of Education's Dean in mid-June, 1987. Appropriate College committees, that is, Teacher Education and Curriculum, presently are considering procedures for implementing recommendations specific to revision of Program Content; similarly, an on-going

dialog is underway between the College and Clark County School District relative to the Induction Year Program.

To state that everything recommended will be implimented as suggested would not be realistic. Even though everyone had education as a common interest, that committees reflecting such diverse backgrounds could agree on a single set of recommendations unto itself is very positive. Teacher training in the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, will be improved; there will be support for the first-year teacher; hopefully, students in the College will benefit from having CCSD Master Teachers share experiences with them on the University campus. Perhaps all that finally is implemented will not be as recommended. Because of the extended efforts of dedicated individuals, however, there will be positive change and students in future classrooms will be the beneficiaries.

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